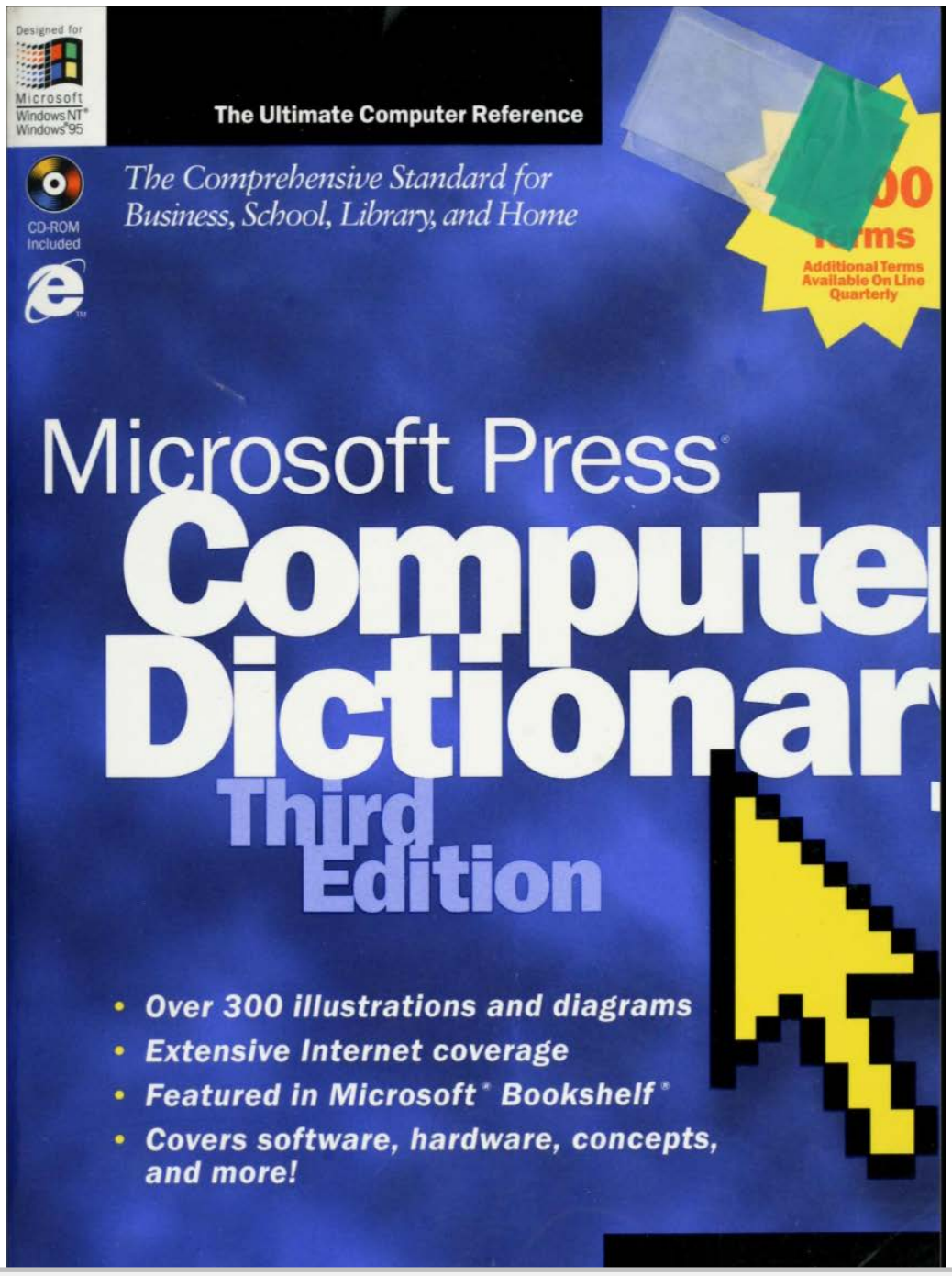


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# Computer Dictionary

Third Edition

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**data set** \dā´tə set´, dat´ə\ *n.* **1.** A collection of related information made up of separate elements that can be treated as a unit in data handling. **2.** In communications, a modem. *See also* modem.

**Data Set Ready** \dā´tə set red´ē, dat´ə\ *n. See* DSR.

**data sharing** \dā´tə shâr´ĕng, dat´ə\ *n.* The use of a single file by more than one person or computer. Data sharing can be done by physically transferring a file from one computer to another, or, more commonly, by networking and computer-to-computer communications.

**data signal** \dā´tə sig´nəl, dat´ə\ *n.* The information transmitted over a line or circuit. It consists of binary digits and can include actual information or messages and other elements such as control characters or error-checking codes.

**data sink** \dā´tə sĕnk´, dat´ə\ *n.* **1.** Any recording medium where data can be stored until needed. **2.** In communications, the portion of a Data Terminal Equipment (DTE) device that receives transmitted data.

**data source** \dā´tə sōrs´, dat´ə\ *n.* **1.** The originator of computer data, frequently an analog or digital data collection device. **2.** In communications, the portion of a Data Terminal Equipment (DTE) device that sends data.

**data stream** \dā´tə strēm´, dat´ə\ *n.* An undifferentiated, byte-by-byte flow of data.

**data structure** \dā´tə struk´chur, dat´ə\ *n.* An organizational scheme, such as a record or array, that can be applied to data to facilitate interpreting the data or performing operations on it.

**data switch** \dā´tə swich´, dat´ə\ *n.* A device in a computer system that routes incoming data to various locations.

**Data Terminal Ready** \dā´tə tər-mə-nəl red´ē, dat´ə\ *n. See* DTR.

**data traffic** \dā´tə traf´ik, dat´ə\ *n.* The exchange of electronic messages—control and data—across a network. Traffic capacity is measured in bandwidth; traffic speed is measured in bits per unit of time.

**data transfer** \dā´tə trans´fər, dat´ə\ *n.* The movement of information from one location to another, either within a computer (as from a disk drive to memory), between a computer and an external device (as between a file server and a computer on a network), or between separate computers.

**data transfer rate** \dā´tə trans´fər rāt, dat´ə\ *n. See* data rate.

**data transmission** \dā´tə tranz-mish´ən, dat´ə\ *n.* The electronic transfer of information from a sending device to a receiving device.

**data type** \dā´tə tīp´, dat´ə\ *n.* In programming, a definition of a set of data that specifies the possible range of values of the set, the operations that can be performed on the values, and the way in which the values are stored in memory. Defining the data type allows a computer to manipulate the data appropriately. Data types are most often supported in high-level languages and often include types such as real, integer, floating point, character, Boolean, and pointer. How a language handles data typing is one of its major characteristics. *See also* cast, constant, enumerated data type, strong typing, type checking, user-defined data type, variable, weak typing.

**data validation** \dā´tə val´ə-dā´shən, dat´ə\ *n.* The process of testing the accuracy of data.

**data value** \dā´tə val´yōō, dat´ə\ *n.* The literal or interpreted meaning of a data item, such as an entry in a database, or a type, such as an integer, that can be used for a variable.

**data warehouse** \dā´tə wâr´hous, dat´ə\ *n.* A database, frequently very large, that can access all of a company's information. While the warehouse can be distributed over several computers and may contain several databases and information from numerous sources in a variety of formats, it should be accessible through a server. Thus, access to the warehouse is transparent to the user, who can use simple commands to retrieve and analyze all the information. The data warehouse also contains data about how the warehouse is organized, where the information can be found, and any connections between data. Frequently used for decision support within an organization, the data warehouse also allows the organization to organize its data, coordinate updates, and see relationships between information gathered from different parts of the organization. *See also* database, decision support system, server (definition 1), transparent (definition 1).

**date stamping** \dāt´ stam´pĕng\ *n.* A software feature that automatically inserts the current date into a document.

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